

FUTURE OF BELGIUM IS BIG ISSUE

Closing of 1915 Finds Belligerents on Both Sides Confident; No Decisive Battle Fought During Year

GERMANY CLAIMS HONORS OF SERIES

Holds Peace Terms But Hesitates to Make Move that Might Be Heralded as Sign of Weakening

By CARL W. ACKERMAN, U. P. staff correspondent.
BERLIN, Dec. 31.—As the 1915 twelvemonth draws to a close the German campaign spreads to more foreign lands: To Turkey and Egypt. Many enormous battles and campaigns in 1915 have decided the war in certain war theaters.

In the Russian campaign the Russian army was pushed into Russia. Serbia has been entirely submerged. Belgium is occupied. Eight of France's richest provinces, with nearly three million people, are under German control.

Germany has lost most of her colonies and her overseas commerce. But between the Central Powers and the Allies there has been no decisive battle, no deciding campaign.

Both sides await with equal confidence and determination this contest. Whether it will be fought or avoided, no one knows. Events will decide. The fate of Belgium depends upon the outcome. If the war is a draw, Belgium's future will depend upon the peace terms.

Peace today depends upon the solution of the Belgian question. Until England and Germany come to an understanding on Belgium's future the war will continue. These statements have been made so often that the United Press asked the censor to pass this article to tell the outside world what everyone here talks about.

During the last few weeks two things became evident. England declared that she will not make peace until Belgium is evacuated. Germany is determined that Belgium will not be given up until Germany is assured that it will not be a political or military ally of Great Britain's.

For several weeks, I have asked high officials what Germany is going to do with Belgium. The answer has been that not even the Kaiser knows. This undoubtedly is true. Much seems to depend upon the future progress of the war.

In Germany there are two parties with regard to Belgium. One wishes to keep Belgium. The other wants to give it up. The line is not distinctly drawn. Many think Germany should keep Antwerp and the forts of Namur and Liege, or that Germany should have the right to garrison those fortresses. Others believe Germany should keep Antwerp as an outlet to the channel for Germany. Others wish Germany to keep all of Belgium, but this is considered a minority.

There is a general feeling that Belgium should never be permitted to return to the position she held before the war. It is felt that Belgium was not neutral because of the documents found in Brussels showing informal discussions of conventions between Belgium and England about landing British troops in Belgium in case of a violation of its neutrality by Germany, which Germany considers, in effect, treaties. The universal opinion seems to be that Germany will not give up Belgium while there is a probability of a renewal of these conventions. The fear exists that England may in the future use Belgium to defeat Germany.

Germany considers that she holds within her hands the terms of peace and that she has won the war, so far as the war and 1915 is concerned. It is asserted, however, that through English control of news channels, what are considered victories here reach the world as defeats. Or, if not as defeats, as indications that Germany is weakening. This breeds concern in Germany that when it comes peace making time the allies will cause any peace terms to be interpreted as German defeats, especially

if Germany shows a willingness to evacuate Belgium. It is said here that the Allies will declare that Germany is defeated or she would never give up Belgium. Many Germans want to keep Belgium because they think it will be the best evidence that Germany has won the war.

Many things are interpreted as evidence that Germany intends or does not intend to keep Belgium. One is that Germany never would have spent the millions of marks for bridges, new railroads, public buildings and other improvements, if she wasn't going to keep Belgium. A large government printing establishment has been erected in Brussels. A wealthy German count, reported to be a friend of the Kaiser's, has erected a large newspaper office there.

On the other hand it is declared Germany could not keep Belgium without giving the people representation in the Reichstag and one official said that would be impossible because "we could never have so many French speaking members of our parliament." Alsace and Lorraine are not considered similar. Less than one-seventh of that territory is inhabited by people of French origin. In Belgium there are practically no Germans.

The whole of Germany therefore, looks to the Kaiser to decide what Germany's final position shall be with regard to Belgium. The constitution provides that the Kaiser shall make the terms of peace. When the Kaiser does decide his lead will be followed.

CRUISER IS BLOWN UP IN HARBOR

By United Press.
LONDON, Dec. 31.—The British cruiser Natal was blown up in her harbor yesterday afternoon, probably with the loss of three hundred lives.

The official statement issued by the admiralty today says the vessel was "wrecked by an internal explosion and reported that four hundred of the crew of seven hundred and twenty-five were saved."

It is believed that most of those saved were men who were ashore when the cruiser sank.

An immediate investigation of the disaster has been ordered.

More to Quit Cabinet.

By United Press.
LONDON, Dec. 31.—Reginald McKenna, chancellor of the exchequer, Sir John Simon, secretary of home affairs, and Walter Runciman, president of the board of trade, will resign from the cabinet, it was rumored when the ministers met today to draft the conscription bill for presentation to parliament. Reports say these members will quit the cabinet because of their opposition to compulsory military service.

Greeks Protest to Allies.

By United Press.
ROME, Dec. 31.—Greece has made a formal protest to the allies against seizure of the diplomatic representatives of the central powers at Salonika, according to a dispatch from Athens. It is reported that the diplomats of the central powers were seized by French military officials at Salonika.

EXPORTS INCREASE

By United Press.
GALVESTON, Dec. 31.—Figures available today show that the exports from the port of Galveston during the year 1915 amounted to \$217,464,896, an increase of twenty-three million over the preceding year.

The imports at the same port decreased to \$5,384,169. Cotton exports totaled \$3,039,696 bales, wheat \$2,361,220 bushels, and cottonseed cake \$29,184,896 pounds.

TEN MEN MISSING.

By United Press.
CHICAGO, Dec. 31.—Ten men were reported missing as a result of an explosion followed by a fire in the American Lined Oil company's plant in South Chicago. It is reported that two engine companies were buried.

AMERICAN DEMANDS GRANTED

Danger of Break in Diplomatic Relations Between United States and Austria Over Ancona is Now Past

OFFICIAL TEXT OF NOTE COMING TODAY

All Requirements of Washington Substantially Met and Only Minor Details Remain for Settlement

By United Press.
WASHINGTON, Dec. 31.—Austria has "substantially" complied with the demands made by the United States regarding the Ancona case and the danger of a severance in the diplomatic relations of the two countries is past.

This is the official view expressed in Washington and it is believed that it lacks only the approval of the president after he reads the Austrian reply to the last note sent by the United States government.

Further negotiations and exchanges of notes are probable, but these negotiations will involve only minor points regarding reparation for lives of Americans lost.

A wave of relief swept the state department following the publication of the unofficial text of the Austrian note. The official text of the document is on the cables and it is believed that the entire note will be in the hands of the secretary Lansing by night.

The three demands made by the United States were disavowal of the sinking of the Ancona while passengers were on board, the punishment of the submarine commander and reparation for the American lives that were lost. Officials say that in effect Austria has granted all of these demands.

The nature of the Austrian note was accurately forecast by the Berlin bureau of the United Press last Tuesday.

EIGHT MORE STATES DRY

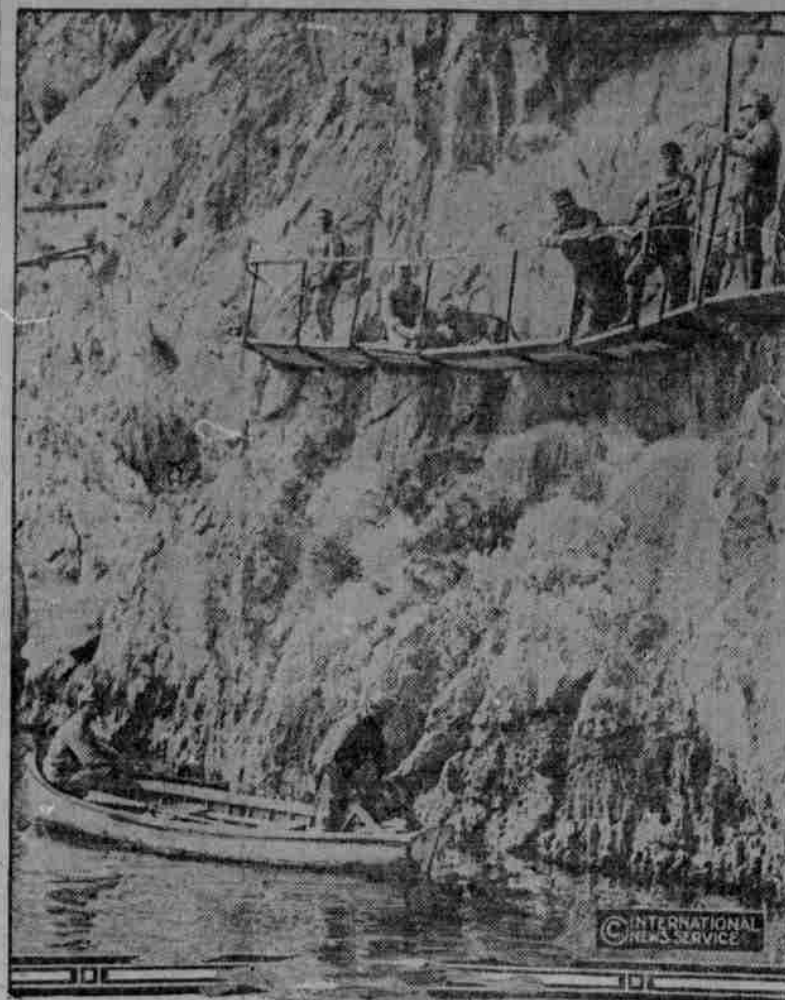
By United Press.
WASHINGTON, D. C., Dec. 31.—Nine states in the United States will go dry in 1916, eight of them at midnight tonight and one, Virginia, Nov. 1, 1916. The eight are Alabama, South Carolina, Idaho, Arkansas, Colorado, Washington, Oregon and Iowa. This will be a total of 19 dry and 29 wet states of a total of 48. The states heretofore dry and the year each became so, are: Maine, 1951; Kansas, 1880; North Dakota, 1889; Georgia and Oklahoma, 1897; Mississippi and North Carolina, 1908; Tennessee, 1909 and Arizona and West Virginia, 1915; Alaska, Vermont, Indiana, Nebraska and South Dakota will vote on prohibition in 1916. If these four states go dry, practically half the United States will be dry. National prohibition through state prohibition is considered probable within a very few years by leading prohibitionists.

150 Saloons Close.

By United Press.
LITTLE ROCK, Dec. 31.—Arkansas will go dry tonight. One hundred and fifty saloons in eight of the seventy-five counties will go out of business. The other counties are already dry through local option.

The closing of the saloons means a loss of revenues of fifty thousand dollars annually. It is announced that the liquor forces will not fight the enforcement of the law.

PERILOUS WORK IN THE TYROL



Austrian troops building a passway along the side of a mountain in the Tyrol to give them a new line for attack.

THE OLD YEAR TO THE NEW

By United Press.
ETERNITY HALL, Eternity, Dec. 31.—A copy of Polonius Old Year's advice to his son, Laertes Nyneteen Sixteen, was presented to the United Press correspondent by Father Time here late today. It reads:

"My son, I stand upon the threshold of Oblivion, wherein I soon shall vanish never to return. My legacy to you is a sadly disorganized world; and I trust that you will faithfully and better administer it than have I. You will have many things to contend with, but take them easy."

"A menagerie, led by a donkey, an elephant and a Bull Moose will chase the Winged Rooster of Victory up and down your days to the jaws of November. Heed them not. Men with peace missions they don't know what to do with will try to settle a war being fought for reasons no one has discovered. Let them go."

"The Panama canal may slide all over South America and Colonel Goethals' conversation will sound like a frequent reference to the Gatun dam. Let him alone. Cupid may pretend to scorn romance, and be engrossed in Eugenics. Tell him that Europe needs babies. Let the war dogs chase their own tails until the peace dove sheds some of its court plaster. Then cautiously look about and see what you can do to fix things up."

"Remember that styles, suffrage, the tariff and sample mustaches you have always with you. Do the best you can with all these things and remember that however powerful and able you feel in this year youth, on the 365th day of your reign you will be weary and old and worn. Your robes, once white, will be drizzled and torn and stained, as flapping rags about your withered legs. Your hand palsied, your step halt, your eyes dim. You will die; and the world will go on. So take it easy, and don't get excited. If you sigh for a Place in the Sun, let it be on a park bench on a summer afternoon. Do these things in calm judgment and you may accomplish more than you expect."

"Forever affectionately yours, 'THE OLD YEAR.'"

"Oscar" Gets in Limelight Again; Trunk Left Behind

Once in awhile someone gets married in Chickasha. In fact this occurrence happens more than once in awhile—it happens neatly, regularly and often.

As a rule the parties to the crime take a malicious pride in letting their friends know about the deal. The reporter is hunted up by the bridegroom-elect and told: "Say, Old Top, Nancy Jane and me are a-goin' to get spliced Wednesday evenin' an' we thought you might want to tell the folks about it in your paper." And then the smokes are forthcoming and the reporter spreads himself and writes a post-mortem eulogy in which the soon-to-be benedict is crowned with all the virtues, under load of which one man can stand erect, and the bride-to-be is in choice language made to blush like the dew-kissed early morning rose.

Again the bridegroom-elect will chance to be of a retiring disposition and will keep the story of coming events maliciously hidden beneath the crowning glory of his hat and will dodge his friends and he like a trooper to the reporter, and will swear by all the gods of the sacred and profane nations of the earth that matrimony is the least of the intentions he entertains at the present moment and that honest-to-goodness, "I don't think I'll ever get married and when I do I'll tell you the first man in Chickasha, or London, or Bingen on the Rhine, or Washington, or San Francisco, or Montreal, or the City of Mexico, or Tuttle or Minco, or Rush Springs, or New York, or Verden or the New Jerusalem."

And the reporter, being himself imbued with the truth will listen to these words and will believe them and will go off and write the story of a dog fight or of a divorce suit filed, while the gay deceiver will slip into the court house and get a marriage permit and call the preacher by telephone and swear him to secrecy and after the ceremony grab his bride and kiss her and get a taxicab and slip off to the local depot and have his trunks sent down to that depot in "my mother's" name and sit in the taxi until the train pulls in and then catch his bride by the right wing and hustle her into the Pullman and slide out of town happy in the knowledge he beat the reporter out of a story and also happy in the lack of knowledge of the plain fact that he and his lady managed to board the train and forget to have their trunks checked.

And that is what happened to J. Edwin Pool.

You know Pool, don't you? He is an old reporter, and being such is of a very bashful and retiring disposition. He shrinks from publicity even as a Thomas cat shrinks from a mouse. That is, under ordinary circumstances he does.

Pool lives away off yonder in Atlanta, Ga. He used to live in Chickasha, Okla. The other day Pool left Atlanta and after "marching through Georgia" arrived in Chickasha.

And after his arrival here Pool told the trusting and innocent and guileless reporter that he was here for the purpose of eating Christmas dinner with old friends and creditors, nothing more.

But Pool was afraid of the light of publicity. He dreaded a bombardment of old shoes and a hail of rice. No trunks belonging to Mr. or Mrs. Pool would leave Chickasha labeled "We Are Just Married." So, after corrupting the truth in his statements to the

reporter, Pool secured the services of a local baggageman to "Haul my mother's trunks to the Frisco."

And then he and his bride went to that depot in a taxi and sat in the taxi until the train was ready to pull out and Pool forgot all about the trunks until he and Mrs. Pool arrived at a hotel in St. Louis or Memphis or some other city. It was then that Pool was brought to earth by his bride, saying, "Oscar, please have my trunks sent up."

"Thunder and lightning," said Oscar, under his breath, of course, "I forgot to check the trunks."

And then about \$9.75 worth of telegraphing took place and the trunks are now on their way to Atlanta, where they may arrive some time during the course of human events, while bride remarks of boneheads in general and an Atlanta reporter bonehead in particular.

COURT HOUSE WEDDING YESTERDAY.

Yesterday afternoon the court clerk issued the following marriage licenses: Lee Curtis, aged 19, to Miss Lou Shackelford, aged 19, both of Rush Springs. The bridegroom presented to the clerk the written consent of his father to the marriage. Joseph Donaldson, aged 38, to Mrs. Beatrice Patton, aged 29, both of Chickasha. Judge Moore being called in, performed the marriage ceremony for the last named couple.

ARRESTED FOR TRIPLE MURDER

By United Press.
TEXARKANA, Dec. 31.—Dispatches received here today brought news of one of the most brutal tragedies in the history of this section.

T. J. Mayfield, aged 70, his wife, aged 65, and his son, aged 45, were founded dead in their home near New Boston this morning.

Another son, Lee Mayfield, aged 40, was arrested on a charge of having murdered the three. The trio were murdered some time last night, their heads apparently having been battered with an axe.

Lee Mayfield notified neighbors shortly after midnight. He said he had found the bodies when he returned from a lodge meeting in New Boston.

RETURNS FROM DALLAS.

A. K. Swan, assistant county attorney for Grady county, returned this morning from Dallas, where he has been in connection with the suit recently filed against Treasurer Mullican by E. B. Johnson. The suit was brought to restrain Treasurer Mullican from collecting certain taxes assessed against the Minco drainage district. Matheny, Dixon and company, are holders of the drainage district bonds and will be joined to the suit as parties defendant. The case will be tried by Bond & Melton, attorneys for the plaintiff, and A. K. Swan of Chickasha and Locke & Locke, attorneys for the bond company, will represent the defense.

THREE GIVE \$5000 BOND

By United Press.
NEW YORK, Dec. 31.—Former Congressman Robert Fowler, Henry S. Martin and Herman Schulteis appeared before United States Commissioner Taylor here today and furnished five thousand dollar bonds for their appearance in federal court in New York to answer to indictments charging conspiracy to defraud.

It is understood that Congressman Buchanan of Illinois, who was indicted on the same charge in connection with the activities of the Peace Labor Council, will go to New York, Monday or Tuesday to enter his plea.

LITTLE BOY DIES.

Roma Ogla, aged two years, died at the home of his parents, Mr. and Mrs. R. M. Ogla, ten miles east of Chickasha, this morning, and will be buried at the Naples cemetery tomorrow afternoon.

INCREASE FORCE AT R. I. SHOPS

Forty More Men Go to Work in Locomotive Department Monday; Repair Crew Also Augmented; Ruas Remain Unchanged

CHANGES FAIL TO AFFECT CHICKASHA

Addition to Payroll Will Amount to from \$3000 to \$4500 Per Month; Business of Roads Shows Gain

Monday morning, January 3, forty men will be added to the locomotive department of the Rock Island shops at Chickasha. This number added to the number put on during the past fall will bring the shop force at this point up to its normal standard.

In addition to the forty added to the locomotive department a number will also be put on in the car repairing department.

The addition to the locomotive departments at the shops will increase the daily payroll of the Rock Island in Chickasha from \$100 to \$150, or from \$3,000 to \$4,500 per month over that already in effect.

The recent changes affecting El Reno will in no manner affect Chickasha. The same number of crews will work out of here as formerly and the main line runs will remain unchanged. The engines in the passenger service will be put into a longer mileage service, but the engineers will change here as heretofore.

The work of repairing the shops here will begin at once. The locomotive shops will be re-roofed and possibly enlarged. The contract for doing this work has already been awarded and the needed construction will begin at once.

Railway conditions in Chickasha are reported good. The freight business will show a healthy increase with the close of the year 1915 over the business done during the year 1914. Possibly the Rock Island has enjoyed the heaviest share of the public's patronage, but the books of the Santa Fe and the Frisco roads will also show a big increase in business from and into and through Chickasha.

It is possible that more trains may be added to the Rock Island service out of Chickasha within the next thirty days, but up to the present this remains a rumor without authoritative confirmation.

BOYS GO TO STILLWATER TO TAKE SHORT COURSE.

County Agent O. C. Cooper will leave Sunday morning for Stillwater with the four boys who won second prizes in the cotton, corn, kafir and pig clubs at the Grady county fair last fall. These lads were awarded what is known as the "short course" at the Stillwater A. & M. college. The boys winning the first prizes were given a trip to the state fair at Oklahoma City last fall. The boys who won the second prizes and who will accompany Mr. Cooper Sunday morning are: J. B. Wallace, cotton club; Leo Whalen, corn club; Kenton Hurst, kafir club; Albert Cash, pig club.

LORIMER TRIAL JAN. 17.

By United Press.
CHICAGO, Dec. 31.—William Lorimer, former United States senator from Illinois, who was ousted from the senate in 1911, will go to trial January 17 on the charge of conspiracy growing out of the wrecking of the La Salle Street Savings and Trust company. The date for his trial was set today by Judge Dover.

WEATHER FORECAST. For Oklahoma.

Probably rain or snow tonight and Saturday.

Local Temperature.

During twenty-four hours ending 8 a. m. today:
Maximum, 47 degrees.
Minimum, 33 degrees.